



and the

Lee Recycling Committee

A CONSUMERS' GUIDE TO THE POLYSTYRENE AND PLASTIC BAG BYLAWS GOING INTO EFFECT IN MAY 2017

Overview of the Tri-Town Health Department

The Tri Town Health Department, a multi-faceted, regional health agency charged with delivering the ten essential services of public health, is overseen by Board of Health members from Lee, Lenox, and Stockbridge. The department implements a broad spectrum of programs for its three member communities as well other Berkshire County cities and towns.

Overview of the Lee Recycling Committee

We are a citizen's committee working to –

- enhance the quality of life for our residents, visitors, and future generations;
- foster environmentally friendly policies and practices by sharing resources with businesses and the public; collaborating with elected officials, other Town bodies, and volunteers; and providing appropriate support; and
- take direct action – on our own and with others – that conserves resources, reduces waste, and cleans up our community.

Contact Information

Tri-Town Health Department

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Lee Recycling Committee

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Key Provisions of the Adopted Bylaws

At its May 2016 meeting Lee Town Meeting Representatives adopted bylaws regulating the use of polystyrene drink and food containers and thin-film, plastic shopping bags. The key considerations in drafting and approving the bylaws included –

- Making Lee more sustainable and attractive to residents, tourists, and businesses
- Reducing the use of these containers and bags (and their environmental and waste disposal impacts and potential health risks)
- Promoting reusable and recyclable/compostable options
- Maintaining consumer flexibility and helping those who can least afford to make the changes

The following table highlights the implications of the bylaws from consumers’ perspective. For more information or answers to questions you might have, please contact the Tri-Town Health Department or the Lee Recycling Committee (contact information is on the back panel).

Plastic Shopping Bags	Polystyrene
Regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers may use whatever bags or other containers they bring with them. • At checkout, establishments may provide, with or without charge, only reusable shopping bags or recyclable paper bags (which must meet specifications, including labels with required information), or cardboard boxes. • Establishments may not provide bags made of polyethylene. • Raw food and bulk item bags must be made of compostable bioplastics, cellophane, or wax paper; or recyclable paper. 	Regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers may use their own containers. • Food establishments – broadly defined – cannot use or provide food and drink containers made of foam or rigid polystyrene.
Exemptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When shopping, participants in the WIC or SNAP programs and non-profits or charities that distribute goods to clients do not have to pay for recyclable paper bags or, at the establishment’s discretion, reusable bags. • Non-profits and charities that distribute goods to clients are exempt. • Establishments may sell plastic bags contained in packages of multiple units intended for customers’ personal use. • Some food establishments may continue to use thin-film, polyethylene bags for specific applications if approved alternatives don’t exist or if they have been granted a deferment if compliance would cause an undue hardship. 	Exemptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and visitors may purchase packaged food and drink containers made of polystyrene for their personal use. • Food or drink prepared or packaged outside of Lee are exempted. • Some food establishments may continue to use polystyrene for specific applications if approved alternatives don’t exist or if they have been granted a deferment if compliance would cause an undue hardship.
Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lee Board of Health or its designee will be the enforcing agency. • Citizen complaints can trigger investigations. 	Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lee Board of Health or its designee will be the enforcing agency. • Citizen complaints trigger investigations.
Effective Date: May 12, 2017	Effective Date: May 12, 2017